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Studies in *Sisyrinchium*—VI: Additional new Species from the
Southern States

BY EUGENE P. BICKNELL

In the South Atlantic and Gulf States the genus *Sisyrinchium* has expressed itself with marked emphasis. Although not hitherto regarded as forming more than a very insignificant feature of the southern flora the group actually embraces such a number of species that it must take rank among the largest homogeneous genera of the south. These numerous species in their general near relation yet perfect distinctness call to mind especially the interesting brotherhood of species in *Eupanicum* among the grasses.

Since the publication of the first paper of this series describing some of these plants, additional material from the South has been received which reveals a further considerable number of species not hitherto suspected to exist. These come to light mainly through the important collection of the Biltmore Herbarium, kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. C. D. Beadle, and through an interesting series of specimens from the South Atlantic States forwarded by Mr. W. W. Ashe.

Including the new species here described the total number now known to me from the region south of Washington, D. C., and east of the Mississippi is thirty-four. I have no reason to doubt the perfect validity of any one of these, but, on the contrary, am well satisfied that certain of them, as *S. Carolinianum* and *S. Atlanticum*, are still aggregates and that the number of species from the Southern States will yet be materially augmented.

The Texan species will be treated separately in a subsequent paper.

Sisyrinchium incrustatum

Dull green and slightly glaucescent, turning dark when dry, 25–50 cm. high: tufts coarsely brown fibrose at base, the slender roots much elongated. Leaves more than half the height of the stem, 1.5–3.5 mm. wide, erect, tapering to an acuminate point, rather thin but firm and chartaceous, usually harshly rugulose-scabrous between the nerves but varying from merely rugulose to densely incrustate with minute pale points, strongly close-nerved and striate, the striae below becoming prominent and pale in color, often with a lesser alternating series: stems often somewhat curved and twisted, 1.5–3 mm. wide, harsh and scabrous-rugulose like the leaves, especially the prominent wings, the edges like those of the leaves, closely ciliolate-serrulate; nodes one or two, the lower one bearing an erect and prominent often much elongated leaf and two or three peduncles, the upper one terminating an outcurved prolongation of the stem 4–9 cm. long and with a shorter bracteal leaf and mostly three shorter peduncles; peduncles often outcurved, stout or slender, winged, stiff-ciliolate, bracteal leaves harsh and striate like the lower leaves, the clasping base somewhat broadened and oppositely bicarinate: spathes erect or slightly bent, the subequal bracts 15–25 mm. long, stiff and strongly fine-striate, slenderly sharp attenuate to merely acute or the inner one apiculate from a scarious-margined apex, the outer one very narrowly hyaline-margined, smooth or obscurely scabrous-rugulose: scales silvery-brown, acuminate, more than three-quarters the length of the inner bract; flowers 4–9, violet-blue, perianth about 8 mm. long; staminal column 4–5 mm. high; capsules dark, subglobose, 3–4 mm. high on suberect slightly exserted pedicels; seeds 1–1.25 mm. in diameter, subglobose, finely pitted.

NORTH CAROLINA: in damp or wet sandy soil or in open grassy woods, flowering in July, Forsythe Co., Winston, July, 1897, W. W. Ashe; Sampson Co., W. W. Ashe; Craven Co., July 3, G. McCarthy, U. S. Nat. Herb.

Related to *S. arenicola* and *S. xerophyllum* Greene and apparently in close affinity with *S. rufipes* although a much larger and stouter plant in every way and flowering in midsummer instead of early spring.

Sisyrinchium versicolor

Becoming 35 cm. high, pale green and very glaucous, not drying dark, the sheaths of the leaves rose-pink and the spathes

mostly purplish-tinged; tufts not fibrous at base; roots slender and wiry. Leaves 1.5–3 mm. wide, close-striate, stiff, tapering to an acute point, the edges, like those of the stem mostly serrulate-roughened: stem simple or frequently developing a node with a prominent erect leaf and two peduncles, 1–2.5 mm. wide, the wings distinctly striate: spathes erect, the base narrowed downwards on the sides of the stem, the wings passing up on either side; bracts and lower part of bracteal leaf closely roughened all over with minute points, often prominently striate: outer bract much prolonged beyond the inner in simple stems, little surpassing it when the stem is branched, 2.5–5 cm. long, very acute, the narrowly hyaline margins not united below; inner bract narrow, 17–20 mm. long, often scarios and abruptly pointed at the apex: flowers pale blue, 10–12 mm. long; staminal column about 5 mm. high: capsules on very delicate, slenderly exserted, subspreading pedicels, pale, apparently subglobose and about 3 mm. high, but not fully mature in the specimens examined.

Washington, D. C., to Georgia, flowering in May.

Washington, D. C., May 11, 1884, U. S. Nat. Herb.

NORTH CAROLINA: Raleigh, May, 1896, hillsides, W. W. Ashe, Type; Chapel Hill, W. W. Ashe.

GEORGIA: A. W. Chapman in Herb. Torr. Bot. Club.

Apparently nearest to *S. intermedium* and *S. mucronatum*, but as compared with both much paler and more glaucous with stiffer more striate leaves and stem and scabrellous bracts. The roughened bracts have much the appearance of those of the twin-spathed *S. scabrellum* or of extreme forms of the more western *S. campestre*. The latter is a lower more slender species, with always simple stems, the inner bract emerging from the outer one more abruptly and at a point much nearer the less narrowed base of the spathe.

Sisyrinchium Asheianum

Caespitose in close tufts, 20–30 cm. high, not fibrillose-coated at base, pale green and glaucescent, the leaf sheathes and spathes purplish to deep wine-purple; leaves half the height of the stem or longer, erect, 0.5–1.5 mm. wide, close-striate, smooth or sometimes roughened, tapering to a hardened acute or obtusely pointed tip: stems mostly about 1 mm. wide, the margins distinctly few-striate, the edges smooth or denticulate: spathes twin, or even three together, or in reduced stems sometimes solitary, sessile at the top of the stem and subtended by an erect bracteal leaf 2–6 cm.

long; bracts of spathes subequal, 10–16 mm. long, distinctly nerved, glabrous or slightly roughened with minute often purplish points, abruptly scarious obtuse and apiculate to attenuate; inner bract of outer spathe equaling or mostly exceeding the outer one; interior scales silvery white, from half to three quarters the length of the bracts; flowers on hair-like exserted pedicels usually subspreading from the top of the spathe; perianth deep violet-blue, 7–10 mm. long, staminal column 4–5 mm. high: fruit not seen.

NORTH CAROLINA: Salisbury, Rowan Co., April 28, 1897, in wet meadows. Biltmore Herbarium.

Intermediate in appearance with *S. mucronatum* and *S. scabrellum* and related also to *S. albidum* and *S. capillare*. From *S. mucronatum* it is distinguishable at once by its geminate spathes without regard to other characters. *S. albidum* differs in brighter green color, broader, softer and less striate leaves and stem, larger spathes with the broader base passing more abruptly across the sides of the stem and with the bracts greener and more herbaceous and attenuate, less exserted pedicels, paler or white and larger flowers. *S. capillare* is altogether more slender and delicate, and differs further in fibrillose-coated base, merely margined stem, and smaller spathes having narrower more attenuate bracts broadly white hyaline on the margins.

S. Asheianum clearly bears a very close relationship to *S. scabrellum* but is mostly a much lower plant with narrower leaves and stem, less slender roots, more highly colored bracts which are much less herbaceous and attenuate, and smaller, deeper blue flowers; it is moreover either quite glabrous throughout or with only obscure indications of the scabrellous investiture of bracts and leaves which is so noteworthy a character of *S. scabrellum*. The latter, as recorded on collectors' labels, is a plant of dry woodlands, *S. Asheianum* of wet meadows.

Named for Mr. W. Willard Ashe, whose collection of southern *Sisyrinchia* has furnished several new species and who was himself about to publish as new the plant here described.

Sisyrinchium capillare

Extremely slender and delicate, growing in erect thin tufts 20–45 cm. high, closely erect-fibrillose at base; glaucescent, drying a dull olive-green, the spathes and leaf-bases often tinged with pale dull purple; roots slender and wiry. Leaves from half to three

quarters the height of the stems, closely erect, almost filamentary, mostly .05 mm. or less wide and strongly 2-4-striate, very smooth, attenuate-acute, in age often developing hardened tips: stems equally slender with the leaves, wiry and subterete, not winged but narrowly firm-margined, the edges smooth: spathes mostly two or sometimes single, rarely three together, sessile at the top of the stem and closely subtended by an elongated primary bract, very small, 10-13 mm. long, the bracts subequal, mostly very acute or aculeate, somewhat membranous but distinctly nerved, glabrous, the margins conspicuously white-hyaline; primary bract straight and setaceously slender, usually much elongated, 2-8.5 cm. long, the edges narrowly white-hyaline towards the striate base which is on both sides rather abruptly broader than the stem; interior scales silvery-white, usually but little shorter than the bracts: flowers light violet-blue on slenderly exserted, loosely erect, or finally flexuously spreading pedicels; perianth 6-8 mm. long; staminal column about 4 mm. high: capsules pale, subglobose, 2-3 mm. high; seeds irregularly obovoid-subglobose, black, distinctly alveolate, about .75 mm. in diameter.

NORTH CAROLINA to Florida, mostly in flat sandy woods, flowering in April and May.

NORTH CAROLINA: "Read," Herb. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil.: Selma, April, 1899, W. W. Ashe.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Aiken, May, 1899, W. W. Ashe.

GEORGIA: Brunswick, April 16, 1899, W. W. Ashe.

FLORIDA: South of Jacksonville, fourteen and twenty miles, May 13 and 18, 1899, W. W. Ashe.

An exceedingly delicate plant, being one of the most slender species of the entire genus. In its most slender state, the stems and leaves appear almost thread-form, yet the plant may be equally tall with some of the stoutest species.

Sisyrrinchium dichotomum

Dull yellowish-green and glaucescent, not turning dark when dry, 30-40 cm. high, in thin erect tufts, not fibrose-coated at base, the roots slender and simple or nearly so. Leaves rather few, mostly about half the height of the plant, or a few longer, somewhat openly erect, 2-6 mm. wide, often broadened upward to above the middle and tapering-acuminate, rather thin but firm, minutely crystalline-punctulate, the broader ones somewhat distantly striate-nerved, the edges very minutely close-serrulate to nearly smooth: stems broadly thin-winged and similar to the

leaves: inflorescence more or less dichotomous from 2-4 series of nodes, the primary node often below the middle of the plant; leaves of the lower nodes very prominent, elongated and acuminate, manifestly broadened about the middle, sometimes even wider than the basal leaves; branches slightly diverging, usually only one of each pair forked, at least above the first or second node, the lower nodes usually bearing also 2-3 slender, often curved peduncles sometimes over 10 cm. long; uppermost peduncles 3-5 cm. long, often very slender and curved; lower branches 6-12 cm. long, broadly winged, the upper series increasingly shorter and more slender: spathes green, very small, often scarcely broader than the peduncles and keeled on either side of the narrowed base by its ascending wings, straight, the bracts very narrow, thin and weakly few-nerved, sharp edged, more or less unequal; outer bract slenderly attenuate, mostly prolonged beyond the inner one for 2-7 mm., the edges very narrowly white-hyaline below, united-clasping for 2-3 mm. at base; inner bract 8-15 mm. long, slender-pointed; flowers 3-9, white in the only specimens seen, very small, perianth about 5 mm. long, staminal-column 2-3 mm. high: capsules rather pale and thin-walled, trigonous-subglobose or obovoid, about 3 mm. high on very slender, flexuously-erect, exserted pedicels 15-23 mm. long; seeds only 1-2 in each cell, large, 1.5-2 mm. in diameter, somewhat flattened-subglobose or obovoid, often bluntly angled, strongly umbilicate, black, at first rugulose, but becoming smooth or nearly so and even somewhat shining.

NORTH CAROLINA: Chimney Rock, Rutherford Co., May 11, 1899, fruit mature and only a few flowers remaining. Biltmore Herb.

A rather remarkable species, especially noteworthy by reason of its successively dichotomous system of branching, ample stem-leaves, very small white flowers, small capsules and few large seeds. Apart from its much greater amount of branching its general aspect is perhaps most like that of *S. graminoides* or forms of *S. Carolinianum*, though it may be more nearly related to the following species. It has smaller flowers, broader stem-leaves and fewer larger seeds, than any other eastern species known to me.

Sisyrinchium tenellum

Growing in loose often leafy tufts 15-30 cm. high, not fibrose-coated at base, rather dark dull green, apparently not even glaucescent, usually turning dark in drying; roots soft and slender. Leaves often equaling the stems though sometimes only half as high, very thin and grass-like, soft and openly erect or sometimes

firmer and strictly erect, 1–3 mm. or even 4 mm. wide, tapering and cuspidate, acute, distinctly few-nerved with fainter nerves in the very wide interspaces, the edges, as are those of the stem, very smooth or, sometimes, ciliolate-serrulate; stem 1–3.5 mm. wide, loosely erect, weak and very flat mostly with broad thin wings nerved like the leaves; nodes one or two, when two the lower one sometimes below the middle of the stem; bracteal leaves erect, usually long and narrow and surpassing the peduncles but sometimes much shorter; peduncles one or two, seldom three, diverging, subequal or very unequal, 3–12 cm. long, slender, but flat and wing-margined, mostly under 1 mm. wide, sometimes nearly filiform, the edges smooth to ciliolate-denticulate: spathes green, often abruptly deflected, small and narrow, not seldom scarcely broader than the peduncle; bracts membranous, weakly or obscurely few-nerved, slenderly attenuate and very acute, or sometimes the inner one apiculate from a somewhat scarious apex, the outer one usually more or less prolonged; outer bract 12–25 mm. long, mostly surpassing the inner one 2–10 mm., but sometimes subequal with it, slenderly attenuate, the margins narrowly white-hyaline, united-clasping for 2–5 mm. at base: inner bract usually closely appressed, under 1.5 mm. long: interior scales half the length of the spathes or less, becoming brownish tinged: flowers 3–5, violet-blue, distinctly fine-nerved, very small, perianth 5–8 mm. long, staminal column 2.5–4 mm. high: capsules dark, subglobose, very small, 1.5–3 mm. high, on hairlike exserted pedicels somewhat spreading above; seeds only 2–3 in each cell, globose, rough, only obscurely if at all umbilicate, very small, about .75 mm. in diameter.

Alabama and Georgia, in moist soil, flowering in May and June.

ALABAMA: Lee Co., Auburn, several collections by F. S. Earle, C. F. Baker, and L. M. Underwood, 1896–99, in Herb. F. S. Earle, Ala. Biol. Survey and Columbia University.

GEORGIA: Floyd Co., Silver Creek, May 8, 1899, Biltmore Herb.; Jefferson Co., Louisville, Hopkins, Herb. Miss. Bot. Gard.

An interesting species in close relationship with *S. graminoides*, but smaller, with generally much narrower stems and leaves, much smaller flowers and capsules, and fewer smaller seeds; the leaves and stem are also thinner and softer and usually quite without serrulate edges, the leaves more tapering-acute, the small spathes relatively narrower and often or usually abruptly deflected, the bracts commonly more narrowly attenuate and unequal, the pedicels less exserted and flexuous.

The few-seeded capsules are suggestive of *S. dichotomum* to which, in other respects, the species seems to be related, but not so closely as to need detailed comparison.

The above description of the species has been considerably modified to accommodate the collection cited from Silver Creek, Georgia, represented by a very full sheet of specimens. These differ from all the others in serrulate edges of stem and leaf, more slender peduncles uniformly much surpassing the bracteal leaves, rather broader and straighter spathes of less attenuate subequal bracts, the outer one less united clasping, the inner one mostly abruptly pointed from a scarious tip. It is quite possible that this plant merits separate recognition.

Sisyrinchium membranaceum

Rather low, 20–25 cm. high, and loosely erect or assurgent in thin tufts not fibrose at base, arising from rather loosely short-branched rootstocks, the roots slender and nearly simple: plant scarcely if at all glaucescent, becoming dull brownish-green on the herbarium sheet. Leaves loosely suberect, half the height of the stem or more, 1.5–3.5 mm. wide, cuspidate-acute, very thin and membranous, becoming somewhat shining when dry, delicately but prominently few-nerved with a secondary series of faint nerves in the interspaces which are very minutely and closely crystalline-punctulate, edges of the leaves mostly minutely close-serrulate: stem similar to the leaves, broadly thin-winged, the raised line of the proper stem very narrow: node one, rarely two, bearing a short erect bracteal leaf 2–6 cm. long, and two slender peduncles 4–10 cm. long, frequently longer than the stem: peduncles flat, wing-margined and serrulate-roughened, distinctly constricted transversely below the spathes, the outer one slightly diverging, often only half the length of the erect inner one: spathes green or tinged with purple, slightly deflected or straight, the subequal bracts thin and membranous and delicately or obscurely veined, rather sharply keeled and almost cuspidate-acute, mostly 15 mm. or less long (13–18 mm.) either one slightly the longer, the outer one narrowly attenuate, very narrowly hyaline-edged, united-clasping below for 4–6 mm., sometimes for half its length: inner bract rather broader above and more abruptly acute: interior scales often equaling the bracts or nearly so, but sometimes much shorter, brownish-tinged: flowers 3–5, violet-blue, perianth rather firm and shining membranous in the dried specimens, the segments obovate-oblong, delicately firm-nerved, slenderly aristulate, 10–12 mm. long:

stamineal-column 5 mm. long, anthers small: capsules dark, trigonous-subglobose, 3–5 mm. high, on delicate slenderly exerted pedicels, erect to widely spreading above; seeds only 2–3 in each cell, immature but evidently large.

FLORIDA: Jackson Co., Marianna, April 20, 1899, in full flower; rich shaded soil. Biltmore Herb.

The relationship of this species is with *S. graminoides* and *S. tenellum*. From the latter it is distinguished at once by much larger flowers and capsules without regard to other characters. The flowers are also rather larger than in *S. graminoides* with the broader segments apparently of a more firmly membranous texture as also are the more strongly few-nerved leaves; the bracteal leaf is much shorter and less foliaceous, the peduncles relatively longer and the often deflected spathes much smaller, with less herbaceous bracts, the outer one more united, clasping below; the interior scales, though variable, become much longer than they are ever seen in *S. graminoides* and the few and larger seeds are a further noteworthy point of difference. The whole plant is lower and less erect than *S. graminoides* and with a more loosely branched underground system.

Sisyrinchium flexile

Tall and slender, about 50 cm. high, apparently in thin tufts, not fibrose-coated at base, pale green but only slightly if at all glaucous. Leaves long and slender, the longer ones equaling the stems or nearly so, rather stiffly erect, withering-persistent, 1.5 mm. wide, closely few-striate, somewhat obtusely pointed with a hardened tip, at least in age, very smooth throughout: stems equally smooth and slender with the leaves, somewhat flexuously erect, subterete and very narrowly firm-margined; nodes one or two, distinctly swollen, when two the lower one bearing a somewhat geniculate slender branch, nearly terete, with slightly roughened margins and a narrow bracteal leaf, the upper node bearing a very short bracteal leaf, sometimes with hardened incurved apex, and two delicate, nearly terete, slightly geniculate peduncles, 3–7 cm. long; spathes pale, slightly deflected, 15 mm. or more long, narrow, especially the subterete base, the bracts subequal, closely striate, their narrow tips scarious-obtuse or sometimes short-apiculate, the inner one sometimes the longer; interior scales silvery white, $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the bracts; flowers unknown: capsules 5–10, dark brown and rather thick-walled, broadly oblong or

obovoid-oblong, 4-6 mm. high, on erect, more or less exserted pedicels slightly spreading above; seeds numerous, very small, .05-1 mm. in diameter, black, alveolate, umbilicate.

MISSISSIPPI: Petit Bois Island, May 8, 1898, with mature fruit, S. M. Tracy.

A very slender species especially characterized by flexuously elongated stems and leaves, peculiarly thickened nodes, scarious-obtuse bracts and very small seeds. It appears to be nearest to *S. Atlanticum*, but possesses many points of difference. In addition to those above referred to may be noted its less glaucous character, firmer and more wiry and subterete narrowly margined stem, narrower spathes of stiffer, less membranous, and more closely striate-nerved bracts, larger capsules. In the two scant specimens, which alone have afforded the outlines of the species, the shortened and scarious-obtuse, outer bract appears to represent a perfectly normal condition; should it prove to be constant it will afford a unique distinctive character among our species.

Sisyrinchium Tracyi

Pale green and slightly glaucescent, discoloring somewhat in drying, rather stout and stiff, 35-70 cm. high, bearing some loose stiff fibers about the base but not densely fibrose-coated; leaves about $\frac{3}{4}$ the height of the plant or longer, firm and erect, 1-3 mm. wide, close-striate, becoming faintly rugulose, tapering-acute, very smooth throughout: stems rigid, straight or out-curved, 1.5-3 mm. wide, subterete and narrowly firm margined, very smooth; inflorescence stiff and, at least in its early stage, appearing somewhat contracted-sub-paniculate, the lower node bearing one to three erect peduncles and one or two stiff, mostly short branches supporting a cluster of 3 or 4 peduncles; branches subterete and merely margined, smooth or obscurely denticulate, erect or ascending, 4-9 cm. long, the peduncles slender but stiff, approximate, those from the upper nodes 3-5 cm. long; lower bracteal leaf elongated and erect, equaling its inflorescence or shorter, sometimes 16 cm. long; upper bracteal leaves short and stiff: spathes green, sometimes slightly deflected from the abruptly constricted top of the peduncle, about 3 mm. wide, the flattened base rather sharply two-edged, the bracts strongly close-striate, subequal, 15-22 mm. long, the outer one herbaceous or abruptly short-acuminate, the margins white-hyaline, united clasping below for about 5 mm., the inner bract mostly apiculate from a thin scarious-obtuse or truncate apex; interior-scales silvery white,

broad, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the bracts: flowers on erect, scarcely exerted pedicels, violet-blue, the perianth 10–12 mm. long, with long-aristulate segments; stamineal column 5–6 mm. high; fruit not seen.

MISSISSIPPI: Biloxi, March 20, 1898, just in flower, S. M. Tracy.

A rather stout and stiffly erect species, perhaps more suggestive of *S. Atlanticum* than any other but showing material differences. Unlike *S. Atlanticum* it is scarcely if at all glaucous, and has a very rigid and subterete merely margined stem and longer stiffer leaves; the bracteal leaves are more foliaceous and the subpaniculate inflorescence stiffer and more contracted, with the bracts of the spathe thicker and more closely striate-nerved.

Named for Prof. S. M. Tracy whose collections of Mississippi *Sisyrinchia* have furnished several new species.

Sisyrinchium nanum

Described from a single specimen, probably untypical. Low and stiff, 12 cm. high, pale green and glaucous, not at all fibrillose at base, the long descending roots nearly simple and slightly thickened: leaves erect, some of them equaling or surpassing the stems, 1–2 mm. wide, prominently close-striate, tapering to a stiffened subterete, acute apex, very smooth, or sometimes, when young, roughened on the sides with minute points and with denticulate edges, firmly membranous below and abruptly expanded-clasping at the extreme base: stems subterete and stiff with firm narrow margins, the edges smooth; node only one, bearing an erect leaf about equaling the single short outcurved peduncle; peduncles about 3 cm. long, very narrowly margined, smooth-edged or obscurely denticulate, constricted below the spathe; spathes 13 mm. long, narrowed below; bracts closely striate-nerved, the outer one narrowed to a short-pointed apex, the margins broadly white-hyaline to the tip, united-clasping for 5 mm. below; inner bract prominently surpassing the outer one, broadly scarious obtuse and abruptly contracted to the short-apiculate apex, interior scales broad, acuminate, the longer equaling or exceeding the outer bract; flowers apparently few, on slightly exerted pedicels, bright violet-blue, about 10 mm. long; stamineal column 4 mm. high.

MISSISSIPPI: Horn Island, June 1, 1898, Prof. S. M. Tracy.

The specimen cited is a very small plant only just in flower, and it is scarcely probable that it is fairly representative of its

species. Ordinarily there would be little excuse for proposing a new species on so slender a basis, but I have the less hesitation in so doing in the present case because it is impossible to reconcile the specimen with any species known to me and the exact locality where it was collected being known the true status and relationship of the plant can be readily ascertained at some future time.

It is to be compared especially with *S. tortum*, agreeing with that species in the short stamineal column; but it differs obviously in other characters, notably in the entire absence of the fibrous investiture of the base of the tufts.